

SCIENTIFIC NOTE

**FIRST RECORD OF
MICROCEROTERMES SERRULA (DESNEUX)
(ISOPTERA: TERMITIDAE)
IN THAILAND¹**Richard M. Houseman²

Our knowledge of termite biodiversity in Thailand historically has been limited. Holmgren (1913) first recorded five species and Snyder's (1949) catalogue of the termites of the world listed six. It was not until Ahmad's (1965) monograph that a significant survey of Thailand termite diversity was published. He recorded 74 species in 29 genera, of which 32 species were new to science. Later, 19 species were listed by Harris (1968) from collections made by H. Hillman and A. Manjikul. Morimoto (1973) reported 48 species from his collections in Thailand, including 13 new records and four species new to science. Based on all published records, 90 termite species in 29 genera have been reported from Thailand. Most published records are from north of the Isthmus of Kra, while a few collections have been reported from the southern peninsular region of Thailand.

Five species of *Microcerotermes* have been reported from Thailand: *Microcerotermes minutus* Ahmad, *Microcerotermes annandalei* Silvestri, *Microcerotermes crassus* Snyder, *Microcerotermes paracelebensis* Ahmad, and *Microcerotermes distans* (Haviland). Herein, I report one additional species, *Microcerotermes serrula* (Desneux) (Fig. 1), collected from the southernmost peninsular region of Thailand in Songkhla Province near the border with Malaysia. This species is widespread throughout peninsular Malaysia (Tho 1992) in lowland dipterocarp (Dipterocarpaceae) forests and rubber plantations, where they build characteristic aerial nests on trees. I collected specimens of *M. serrula* from an aerial nest (Fig. 2) in a rubber plantation, and similar nests were observed on rubber trees throughout Songkhla Province. The effect of *M. serrula* on rubber trees and rubber production is unknown.

Repository specimens are located in the National Science Museum, Pathum Thani, Thailand; Royal Forestry Department, Bangkok, Thailand; Department of Pest Management, Faculty of Natural Resources, Prince of Songkhla University, Hat Yai, Thailand; and the Enns Entomology Museum, University of Missouri-Columbia, Columbia, Missouri U.S.A.

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***Microcerotermes serrula* (Desneux)**

THAILAND: Songkhla province, Sadao district, rubber plantation near Ban Phru Tico, ~6 km north of Malaysian border (WGS 84), N 06°34.500 E 100°24.053, 03 June 2003, R.M. Houseman, complete aerial nest containing workers, nymphs, and soldiers.

Fig. 1. Soldier of *Microcerotermes serrula* (Desneux). View of head and pronotum from above.



Fig. 2. Carton nest of *Microcerotermes serrula* (Desneux) in the branches of a rubber tree *Hevea brasiliensis* (Willd.).

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